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General Assembly

Sixty-fifth session

Official Records

18th plenary meeting
Saturday, 25 September 2010, 6 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Deiss ..... (Switzerland)

The meeting was called to order at 6.30 p.m.

High-level Review Meeting on the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Agenda item 20 (*continued*)

Sustainable development

(b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States:

Draft resolution (A/65/L.2)

The President (*spoke in French*): This is the closing plenary of the High-level Review Meeting on the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. I would like to welcome, once again, all of our guests who have joined us today. We have had two full days of rich discussions.

I now give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General, Her Excellency Ms. Asha-Rose Migiro, who will present a summary of the round tables and interactive dialogue that took place over the past two days.

The Deputy Secretary-General: On behalf of the Secretary-General, I am pleased to address the closing plenary of this High-level Review Meeting on the Mauritius Strategy.

I congratulate all participants on the productive and thought-provoking discussions they held during the multi-stakeholder round tables and interactive dialogue of the past two days. The discussions reflect the renewed commitment of small island developing States (SIDS) to address their vulnerabilities and build resilience through sustainable development.

I also commend the international community for its continuing determination to support SIDS in this endeavour. I am very encouraged by the action-oriented suggestions we have heard. It is now my pleasure to provide a brief overview of the key issues that were discussed during these past two days.

The Review Meeting reaffirmed the need for the international community to continue to address and support the unique and particular vulnerabilities of SIDS, which were recognized at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and underscored in Barbados in 1994 and again in Mauritius five years ago.

Substantial progress has been made in implementing the Mauritius Strategy, which is directly linked to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, renewed efforts are needed to live up to promises and commitments made in the recent past. Economic, environmental and social vulnerabilities have further worsened in the past 10 years. As a result, the economic development and progress of SIDS in achieving the MDGs are threatened by external shocks, including the adverse impacts of the global financial,

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food and fuel crises. Climate change further exacerbates these vulnerabilities, leaving the viability and very physical existence of some SIDS at stake.

SIDS have demonstrated strong political commitment to continuing to do their part in building resilience to their special vulnerabilities. However, there is a clear need to bridge gaps in implementation with coordinated and sustainable support from the international community.

Discussions during this High-level Review Meeting highlighted a number of priorities, including defining measurable goals and indicators for monitoring and evaluation, and strengthening capacities for data collection and analysis; scaling up resources made available to SIDS, including for meeting new challenges; enhancing strategic partnerships and monitoring and coordination mechanisms, especially at the regional level and within the United Nations system, through, for example, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the Commission on Sustainable Development; strengthening South-South cooperation, including among SIDS; and placing a special focus on a number of sub-areas, including climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity, natural disasters, sustainable energy, transport and trade, marine and coastal resources, fisheries, tourism, finance and debt sustainability.

Highly vulnerable SIDS face a number of practical challenges, and yet are often not eligible for special financing or other resources. In this respect, the discussion today highlighted the need to develop a SIDS vulnerability index. Middle-income SIDS face special challenges in the absence of international support measures commensurate with their high vulnerability. In this context, it was felt by many discussants that consideration should be given to exploring formal United Nations recognition of SIDS as a special category, to be tied to preferential treatment and access to concessionary financing, debt relief, trade, special programmes and development assistance, without prejudice to the needs of other vulnerable economies.

The review also highlighted shortcomings in institutional support for SIDS and constraints to the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy and the Barbados Programme of Action. A comprehensive review of the Strategy and concrete recommendations for action are needed.

Participants have demonstrated their commitment to advancing the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy towards the sustainable development of SIDS. They have agreed on key priorities for action and proposed suggestions on the way forward.

The United Nations, in partnership with the members of the Inter-agency Consultative Group on Small Island Developing States, which includes all United Nations agencies and other intergovernmental and regional organizations, is committed to providing strong, coherent and coordinated support to these efforts.

The issues facing SIDS are truly global issues that affect us all. Let us work together to make small island developing States a model for sustainable development with lessons and benefits for all. The Secretary-General and I look forward to seeing participants' continuing commitment and leadership in action.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Deputy Secretary-General for her statement.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/65/L.2, entitled "Outcome document of the High-level Review Meeting on the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/65/L.2?

Draft resolution A/65/L.2 was adopted (resolution 65/2).

The President (*spoke in French*): I am personally very happy that this Meeting has enabled Member States to reconfirm their political and financial commitment to addressing the special vulnerabilities of the small island developing States. The sustainable development of those States is inextricably linked to the sustainable development of all Member States. We have only one planet, and we must be united to preserve it and to live in harmony. It is my hope that, in the months and years to come, States Members of United Nations will work together to this end. We will thus show that we all share a common vision of a world where the well-being of each and every one of us depends on the well-being of all.

I would like to express sincere appreciation to Ms. Sylvie Lucas, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, and Mr. Vanu Gopala Menon, Permanent Representative of Singapore, who effectively and patiently conducted the discussions and complex negotiations in the consultations on resolution 65/2. I also thank all Member States for their valuable contributions, without which the outcome document could not have been successfully completed.

I now declare closed the High-level Review Meeting on the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 20.

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.